ROUTE 1

Parx Casino to 54th-City

KEY SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS, ISSUES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

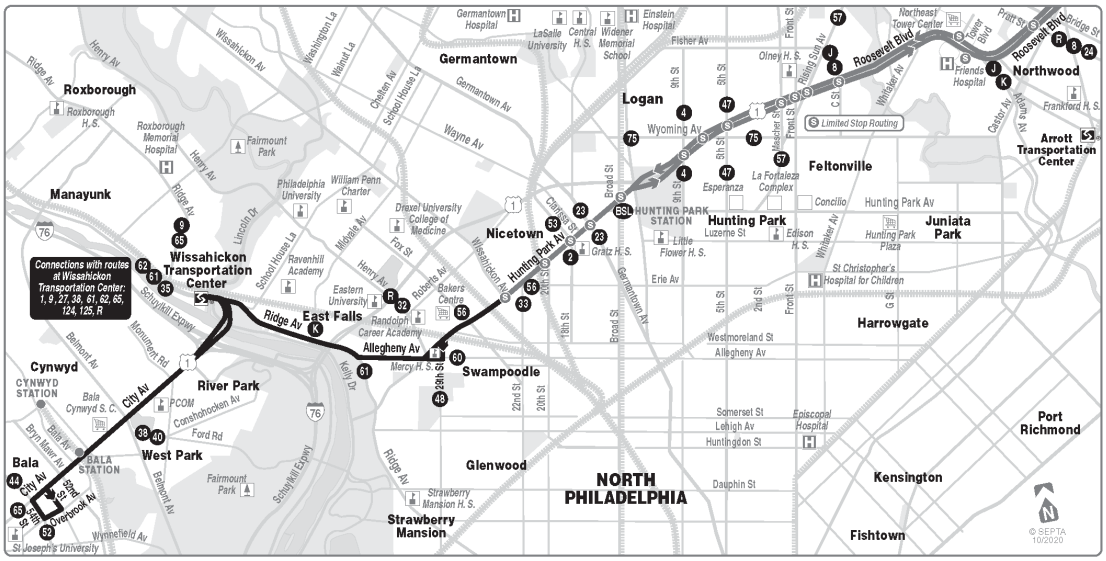
- *Route 1 duplicates other SEPTA services along nearly its entire length at a much lower frequency and only on weekdays and Saturdays. Additionally, its 15 service patterns and very inconsistent stop spacing make service very complex.*
- *Route 1 has relatively low ridership despite its length and the density of the corridors it serves.*
- *The major opportunity for Route 1 is to discontinue the route and reinvest its resources into the routes it duplicates. This change would strengthen the crosstown connection between West Philadelphia to North and Northwest Philadelphia. Alternatively, Route 1 could be redesigned to be a focused coverage route to serve the destinations near Roosevelt Boulevard that it and Route 14 currently serve on some trips.*

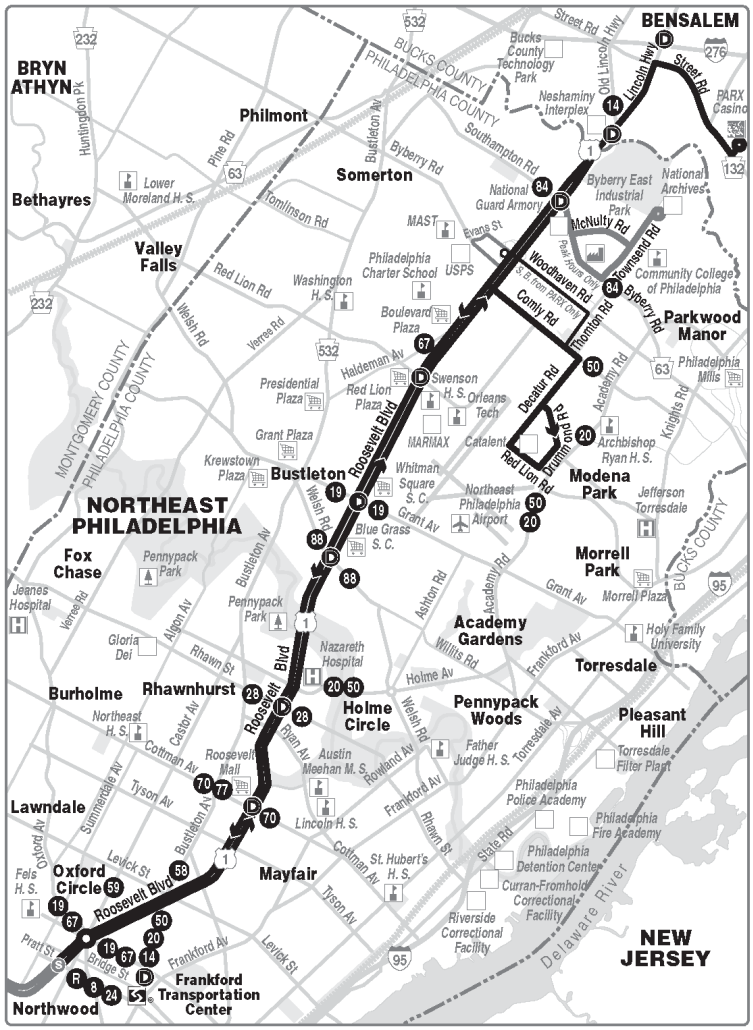
ROUTE OVERVIEW

Route 1's primary function is to provide crosstown service along City Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard between West Philadelphia and Parx Casino, located just beyond the city line in Bensalem. It is a complex route, with 15 service patterns. Route 1's alignment duplicates many other SEPTA routes but at a much lower frequency, and the only portion of its alignment where it provides unique service is along a short stretch of Roosevelt Boulevard between Pratt Street and Bustleton Avenue.

Route 1's northern alignment between 54th Street and Parx Casino is at times direct (i.e., traveling north and south along Roosevelt Boulevard), but includes several circuitous deviations and different northern and southern terminals that make service very complex (as shown in Figure 1). Additionally, there are areas along Route 1's central alignment where it operates limited-stop service, which may make finding places where the bus stops confusing.

Figure 1 | Route Map





SERVICE OVERVIEW

Schedule

Route 1 operates for 20 hours a day from 5:13 AM until 12:15 AM during weekdays and from 7:13 AM to 7:06 PM on Saturdays. No Sunday service is offered (see Table 1):

- On weekdays, service frequencies range widely, from an average of 13 minutes in the early AM to 60 minutes late night when there is a nearly 5-hour break in service before the last two trips.
- AM peak and PM peak weekday service frequencies average around 21 to 25 minutes
- On Saturdays, service runs every hour. As on weekdays, actual frequencies vary from the average.

Table 1 | Schedule Statistics

Service Day	Span Of Service	Frequency (Range)	Frequency (Average)
Weekdays	**5:13 AM – 12:15AM**		
Early AM	4:00 AM - 5:59 AM	11 - 15	13
AM Peak	6:00 AM - 8:59 AM	11 - 34	21
Midday	9:00 AM - 2:59 PM	35 - 61	53
PM Peak	3:00 PM - 5:59 PM	15 - 52	25
Evening	6:00 PM - 9:59 PM	25 - 63	49
Late Night	After 10:00 PM	60	60
Owl	Before 4:00 AM	59 - 59	59
Saturdays	**7:13 AM – 7:06 PM**		
Day	6:00 PM - 7:59 AM	59 - 66	62
Night	Before 8:00 AM & After 5:59 PM	58 - 65	61
Sundays	**No Service**		

Note: Span of service reflects the time the first bus begins service until the time the last bus finishes service.

Service Patterns

Route 1 operates 15 service patterns that make service very complex (see Table 3). The major differences consist of different terminals, local alignments, and out and back deviations. These include:

- Four northern terminals:
  - Parx Casino
  - Decatur Road and Drummond Road
  - Townsend Road and National Archives
  - Byberry Road and Evans Street

- Four southern terminals:
  - 54th Street and City Avenue – where most Route 52 trips also terminate
  - Wissahickon Transportation Center
  - Roosevelt Boulevard and Broad Street
  - Hunting Park Avenue and Wissahickon Avenue
- Mid-route deviations to:
  - Decatur Road and Drummond Road
  - Byberry Road and Evans Street

RIDERSHIP

In Fall 2019, Route 1 carried 2,610 passengers on weekdays and 1,130 on Saturdays (see Table 2). Of all the boardings on Roosevelt Boulevard between Neshaminy Mall and Bustleton Avenue, 13 percent of passengers rode on Route 1, compared to 37 percent on Boulevard Direct and 50 percent on Route 14.

Table 2 | Fall 2019 Ridership and Productivity

	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays
Daily Ridership	**2,614**	**1,142**	**-**
Rank	68	67	-
Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Hour	**36.2**	**33.4**	**-**
Rank	73	55	-

Transfer Patterns

The largest transfer volumes are to and from:

- The Broad Street Line (11 percent of all trips)
- Route R (4.4 percent)
- Route 14 (4.0 percent)
- Route 47 (Whitman Plaza to 5th Street and Godfrey Avenue) (3.6 precent)
- Route 70 (Frankford Avenue and Gregg Street and Torresdale Avenue and Cottman Avenue to Fern Rock Transportation Center) (3.4 percent)

Table 3 | Service Patterns

Pattern	Origin	Destination	Unique Feature	Unique Stops	Trips Per Day Wkd	Sat	Sun
Inbound/Northbound							
229225	54th St & City Ave	Parx Casino	Primary Pattern	0	8	12	0
229232	54th St & City Ave	Parx Casino	Via Decatur/Drummond Ave	25	6	0	0
229226	Roosevelt Blvd & Broad St	Decatur Rd & Drummond Rd	Terminates at Decatur/Drummond Ave	15	3	0	0
229229	Wissahickon Transportation Center	Townsend Rd & Natl Archives layover	Begins at Wissahickon and terminates at Natl Archives; does not serve Parx	14	3	0	0
229231	54th St & City Ave	Decatur Rd & Drummond Rd	Terminates at Decatur/Drummond Ave	15	3	0	0
229227	Hunting Park Av & Wissahickon Ave	Decatur Rd & Drummond Rd	Similar to 229226 but begins at Hunting Park Av & Wissahickon Av	15	2	0	0
229228	Wissahickon Transportation Center	Decatur Rd & Drummond Rd	Beings at Wissahickon and terminates at Decatur/Drummond Ave	15	1	0	0
229230	54th St & City Ave	Roosevelt Blvd & Pratt St	Single evening trip with a limited 8 mile out and back trip.	0	1	0	0
Outbound/Southbound							
229237	Decatur Rd & Drummond Rd	54th St & City Ave	Begins at Decatur/Drummond Ave	0	8	0	0
229238	Parx Casino	54th St & City Ave	Primary Pattern	12	5	12	0
229234	Parx Casino	54th St & City Ave	Via Decatur/Drummond Ave	18	5	0	0
229233	Townsend Rd & Natl Archives	54th St & City Ave	Shorter version of Primary Pattern, originating at Natl Archives	14	3	0	0
229236	Decatur Rd & Drummond Rd	Wissahickon Transportation Center	Begins at Decatur/Drummond Ave, then takes a 4-stop deviation to service Byberry Rd	4	2	0	0
229240	Decatur Rd & Drummond Rd	Wissahickon Transportation Center	Begins at Decatur/Drummond Ave	0	2	0	0
229235	Byberry Rd & Evans St	Wissahickon Transportation Center	Only trip to originate at Byberry Rd	3	1	0	0

Note: Unique stops are those not served by the primary pattern

Ridership by Stop

Route 1's highest ridership occurs along Hunting Park Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard between Wissahickon Avenue and Rising Sun Avenue, where Route 1 duplicates Route R. Most Route 1 stops have very low ridership, except for stops where transfer is available to other more frequent services.

In more detail, on weekday northbound trips (see Figure 2):

- 49 passengers board at 54th Street at City Avenue, which is a transfer location with Routes 44 and 52.
- 118 passengers board along City Avenue.
- 78 passengers board and 13 alight at Wissahickon Transportation Center, which is served by 12 SEPTA routes.
- 30 passengers board and 19 alight along Ridge Avenue.
- 25 passengers board and 23 alight along Allegheny Avenue.
- Ridership increases along Hunting Park Avenue, where there are 306 boardings and 145 alightings before Roosevelt Boulevard. The highest ridership stop along this segment was Hunting Park Avenue at Wissahickon Avenue, which is a transfer point with Route H (Broad Street and Erie Avenue to Cheltenham Avenue and Ogontz Avenue) and Route XH (Broad Street and Erie Avenue to Cheltenham Avenue and Ogontz Avenue), with 66 boardings and 41 alightings.
- 570 passengers board and 880 alight at the 59 stops along the Roosevelt Boulevard segment between Broad Street and Street Road. Some stops see between three and 20 boardings, although more than half—29--of these stops see fewer than three boardings per day, and seven of them see fewer than three alightings. The highest ridership activity occurs at transfer locations with other crosstown routes, including:
    - Roosevelt Boulevard and 5th Street, which is a transfer point with Route 75 (Wayne Junction to Arrott Transportation Center). 82 passengers board and 30 alight here.
    - 158 passengers board and 111 alight at the four stops between Rising Sun Avenue and Pratt Street, where Route 1 operates limited service and passengers can transfer to and from Route 57 (Whitman Plaza to Rising Sun Avenue and Olney Avenue or Fern Rock Transportation Center).
    - 40 passengers board at the five stops between Bridge Street and Comly Street, which is the only segment of Route 1 that is not shared with another SEPTA route.
    - 63 passengers board and 83 alight at Cottman Avenue, where passengers can transfer to and from Routes 70 (Frankford Avenue and Gregg Street and Torresdale Avenue and Cottman Avenue to Fern Rock Transportation Center) and 77 (Roosevelt Boulevard and St Vincent Street to Chestnut Hill).
- Route 1's deviations serve few passengers:

  - Two passengers board and 93 alight along the out and back deviation to Decatur Road. With 26 passengers alighting at the Red Lion Road stop, which serves some large employment sites.
  - One passenger boards and 30 alight along the out and back deviation to Townsend Road.
- Parx Casino sees an average of 58 daily alightings.

Southbound trips have similar ridership patterns. The deviation along Byberry Road (served by a few southbound trips) served less than one average boarding per day. Saturday boardings were lower but with higher ridership activity at Parx Casino.

Figure 2 | Weekday Northbound Ridership by Stop

Ridership by Time of Day

Ridership by Hour

In Fall 2019, ridership was extremely peaked, with ridership in the AM and PM peaks over three times higher than other times of the day (see Figure 3). On Saturdays, ridership was low but consistent throughout the day, and was higher than weekday ridership on a per hour basis between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM.

Ridership and Maximum Loads by Trip

Despite Route 1's long length, its weekday ridership per trip is lower than other routes, likely due to the route's low frequencies compared to the other routes that share its alignment, route repetitiveness, and the long length of the route (see Figure 4):

- Early morning trips before 6:00 AM carried 20 to 40 passengers
- AM peak trips carried 40 to 75 passengers
- Midday trips carried 35 to 70 passengers
- PM peak trips carried 30 to 80 passengers

Most trips have a maximum load of between 20 and 35. Only one northbound trip and one southbound trip during the week slightly exceed the seated max load, both at around 6:00 AM.

On Saturdays, ridership per trip ramps up from 40 passengers at the beginning of service to 65 4:00 PM. It then falls back to about 40 riders per trip in both directions.

Figure 3 | Ridership by Hour: Fall 2019

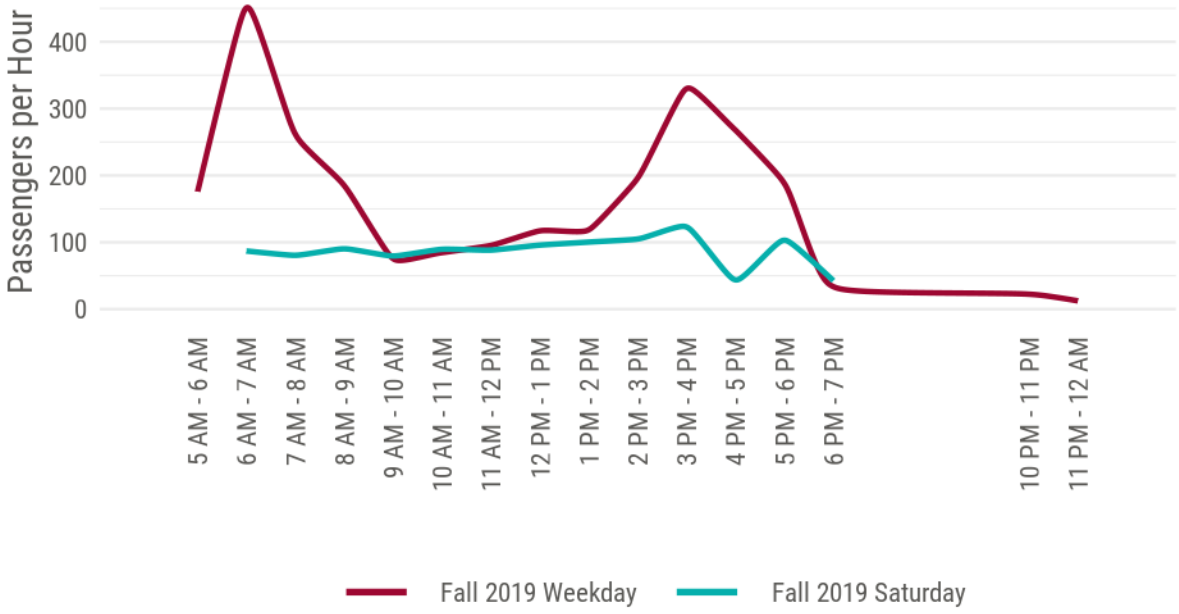
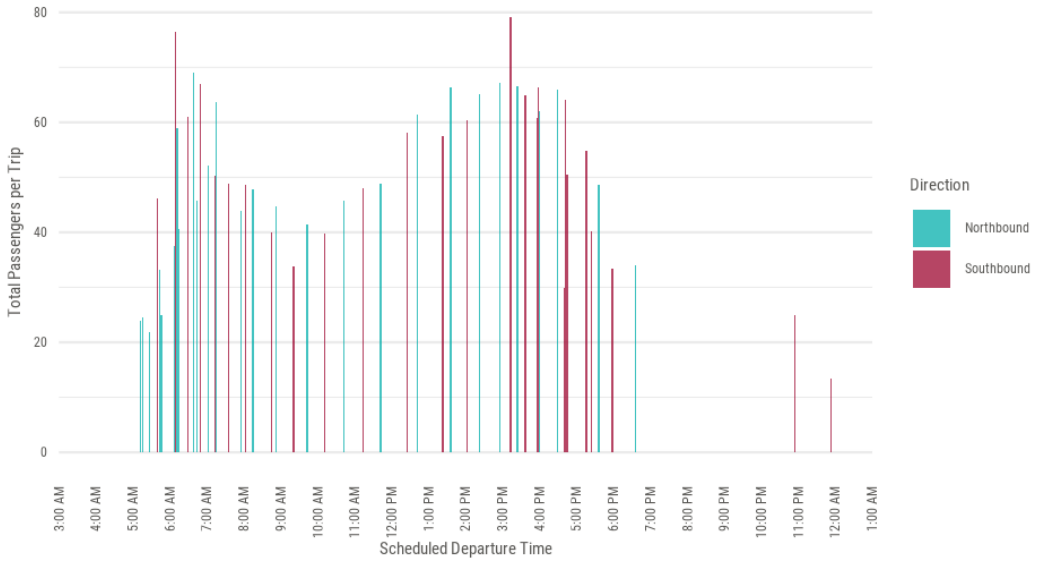


Figure 4 | Weekday Ridership by Trip: Fall 2019



ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND RUNNING TIMES

On-Time Performance

As of Fall 2019, Route 1's on-time performance is substandard at 61 percent on weekdays and 66 percent on Saturdays, (see Table 4). This indicates high levels of running time variability along the route. On weekdays, nearly 10 percent of trips were early while nearly 30 percent were late. Missed trips were a minor issue on weekdays, with 1.2 percent of trips missed.

Table 4 | On-Time Performance: Fall 2019

	Early	On Time	Late	Missed Trips
	(>2 Mins Early)	(<2 Mins Early to 6 Mins Late)	(>6 Mins Late))	
Goal		80%		
Fall 2019 Actual				
Weekday	9.0%	61.1%	29.9%	1.2%
Saturday	9.7%	65.7%	24.6%	0.0%
Sunday				

Note: On-time percentages are for trips that are run (does not include dropped trips)

AVERAGE SPEEDS AND STOP SPACING

Route 1's average weekday speed is 14.6 mph, which is influenced by higher speeds north of Cottman Avenue (see Figure 5). The route is slower along the southern half its alignment including City Avenue, Hunting Park Avenue, and portions of Roosevelt Boulevard, where speeds range from 7 to 11 mph.

Route 1 has 5.2 stops per mile, due to its limited stop spacing along Roosevelt Boulevard. Stop spacing is inconsistent between Wissahickon Transportation Center and Hunting Park Avenue where there are 9.7 stops per mile, contributing to slower average speeds (see Figure 6).

Figure 5 | Average Speeds: PM Peak Northbound

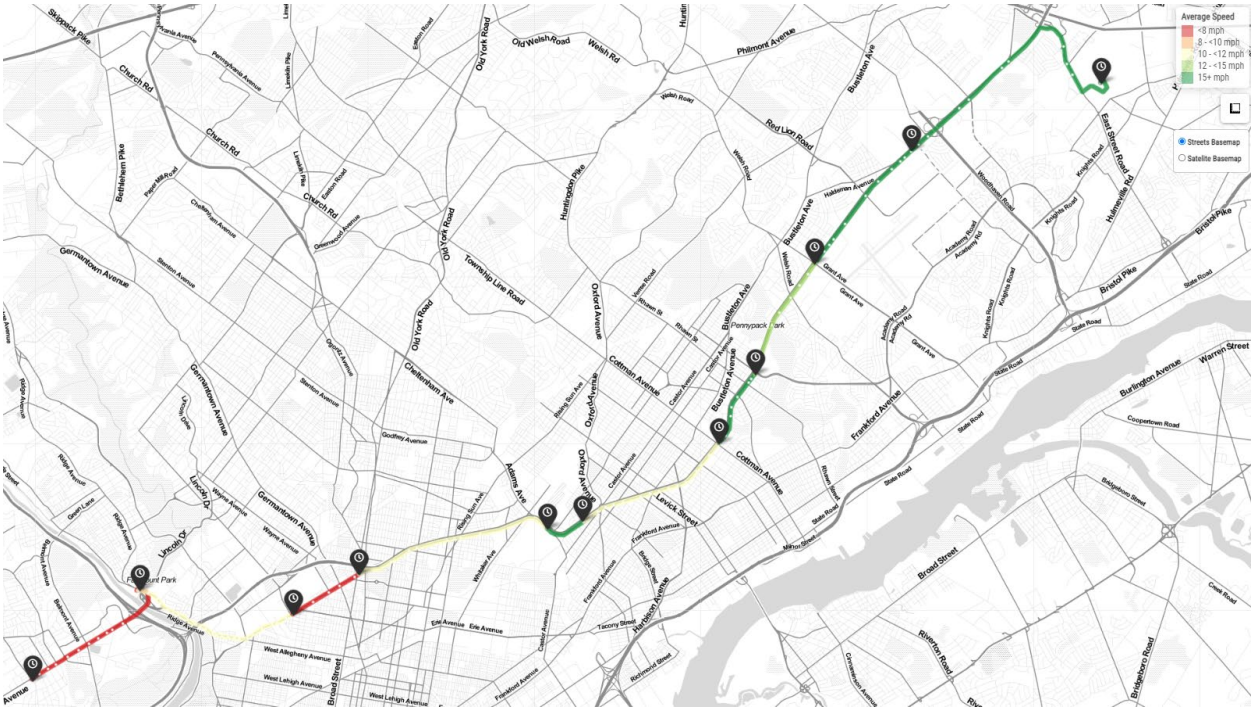
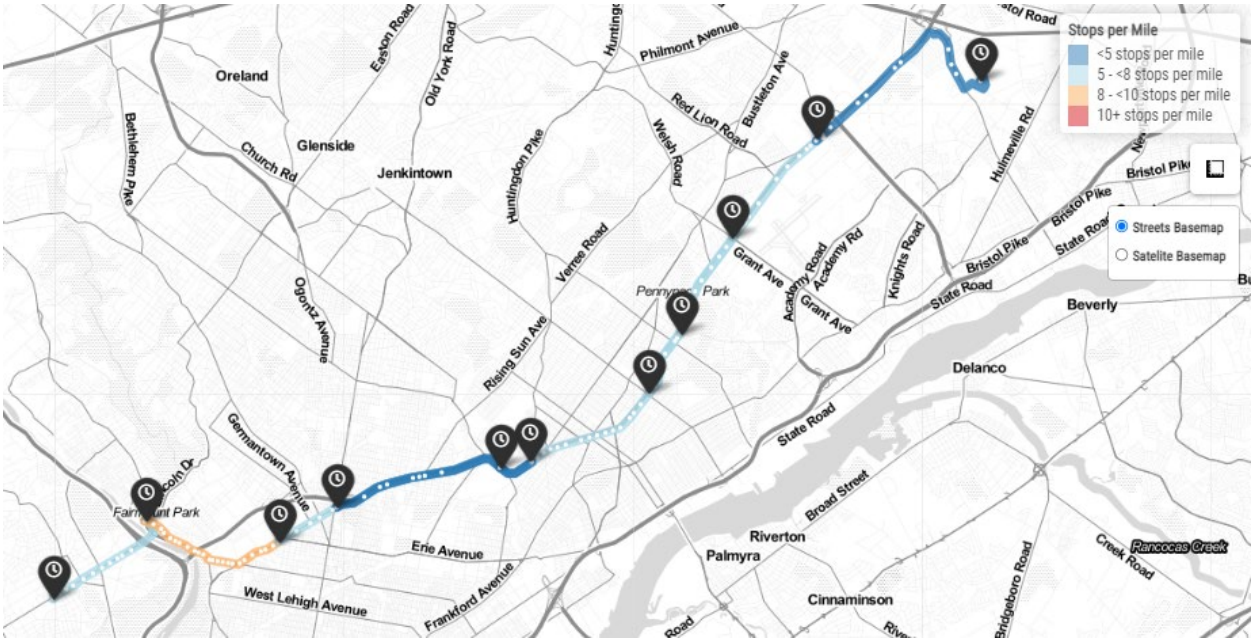


Figure 6 | Stop Spacing by Route Segment



RIDER CHARACTERISTICS

Compared to the system, Route 1 serves a higher proportion of black riders and a slightly higher proportion of riders in poverty (see Table 5).

Table 5 | Rider Characteristics

	Route 1 Riders	Systemwide Average
Median Household Income	$27,603	$32,713
Share in Poverty	34%	30%
Ethnicity		
White	25%	38%
Black	55%	46%
Hispanic	15%	10%
Other	5%	7%
Without a Vehicle	38%	37%
Seniors	12%	15%
With a Disability	2%	2%

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to strengthen Route 1 are listed below:

- **Discontinue Service:** Route 1 duplicates other SEPTA services along much of its alignment, however at a much lower frequency. Having 15 service patterns makes the route very difficult to understand, the presence of limited stops along a select segment of the route creates confusion for riders seeking stops served by Route 1, and the route does not operate on Sundays. These characteristics contribute to Route 1's productivity (it averages under three passengers per revenue mile on weekdays). Route 1 service could be discontinued, and its resources reinvested into routes it duplicates to strengthen Philadelphia's crosstown network, connecting West Philadelphia to North and Northwest Philadelphia.
- **Implement Boulevard Direct Phase II:** SEPTA's proposed Phase II of Boulevard Direct adds a 7.9-mile bus route from Wissahickon Transportation Center to Frankford Transportation Center. Service is designed with stops at several key stations and intersections to facilitate important transfer connections. Implementation of Phase II will provide greater connection for riders to Boulevard Direct, which will help increase overall ridership.
- **Consolidate Route 1, Route 14, and Boulevard Direct:** Boulevard Direct was implemented to offer more efficient travel along Roosevelt Boulevard than is provided by Route 14. Additionally, Phase II of Boulevard Direct would bring further improved service to Roosevelt Boulevard. Route 1 and Route 14 have very close stop spacing and may be taking away riders that would benefit from Boulevard Direct's simple and high-speed service. Consolidating services along Boulevard Direct would require:

- Adding in select infill stations along Roosevelt Boulevard to fill in gaps but maintain limited stop service (at about quarter mile spacing).
- Serve the office parks, schools, and other areas served by Route 14's secondary service patterns with a low frequency coverage route, such as a redesigned Route 1, or discontinue these patterns due to low ridership.
- Significantly increase service frequencies to every five or 10 minutes all day.